

# THE BUDVA DECLARATION

## MARRI REGIONAL FORUM

*Montenegro 21 April 2010*

**We**, the ministers and high representatives responsible for migration, asylum and refugees of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia have met in Budva, Montenegro on 21 of April 2010 in the framework of the Migration, Asylum, Refugee Regional Initiative.

**Guided** by the Herceg-Novi Joint Statement of 6 April 2004 and the principles expressed therein, and the Tirana Declaration of 5 April 2005,

**Reaffirm** the commitment of our Governments for managing population movements in the Western Balkans.

**Reiterate** the importance of continuous dialogue among the Member States to promote security and stability, enhance the cooperation in the area of migration, asylum, readmission, border management, visa regime, consular cooperation and refugees, and to strengthen the institutions dealing with them.

**Appreciate** the significant progress and important step that have been made in the European integration of the Member States, especially in the visa liberalisation process with the EU/Schengen area for Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia and underline good will and assistance of the Initiative and its Member States to support Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina in their way toward reaching the same goal.

**Emphasise** considerable results achieved during the Montenegrin MARRI Presidency-in-Office, notably in:

Setting up the MARRI Regional Committee as a body with the objective to coordinate the activities and provide guidelines as well as ideas on mutual cooperation.

Establishing solid basis for regular exchange of information, experience and good practices in the process of harmonisation of visa policy and consular cooperation among the countries of the region and with the EU. The Memorandum of Understanding on Mutual Consular Protection and Services which is signed today shall provide an additional impulse to create the basis and define the framework of cooperation among the Member States in the field of consular matters.

Establishing and upgrading the network for cooperation among Member States' national institutions in the field of Asylum, consisting of reception centres for asylum seekers and Ministry of Interior asylum units.

Developing a Project Proposal entitled Regional cooperation for circular labour migration in the MARRI Member Countries with objective to improve regional cooperation on circular labour migration.

Connecting and bringing together state border police representatives dealing with readmission in order improve the practical implementation of the readmission agreements in the region.

Creating an effective regional co-operation network between border police at international airport border crossing points as well as permanent regional working group.

Undertaking efforts in improving regional and international co-operation as well as better promotion and visibility of MARRI and its activities with the European Union, NATO and various other partners.

***and therefore,***

**Note** with satisfaction the Montenegro's outstanding coordination and implementation of activities performed during its Presidency-in-Office and the successful organisation of the Ministerial Regional Forum in Montenegro.

**Welcome** the effective work of the MARRI Regional Centre as an operational instrument of the MARRI Regional Forum.

**Reaffirm** our readiness to intensify cooperation between MARRI and other regional and international organisations, major stakeholders in the area of migration, asylum and refugees.

**Place** special emphasis on working towards achieving better cooperation with EU and its Multi Beneficial Programmes of Support – IPA for the region, where MARRI is envisaged as the region's medium of approaching the EU and highlighting the issue of regional relevance.

**Express** our common support to Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina to achieve visa liberalisation regime within 2010.

**Express** gratitude to international organisations and donors that have provided essential financial support for the implementation of MARRI projects, namely the Czech Republic and the Swiss Confederation.

**Express** our firm expectation that the next MARRI Presidency-in-Office of Republic of Albania will give its full contribution to future activities as well as continuation and implementation of the priorities laid out in this Declaration.